

**METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR IMPLEMENTING
VIRTUALIZATION OF STORAGE WITHIN A STORAGE AREA
NETWORK**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Methods and apparatus for implementing storage virtualization on a network device of a storage area network are disclosed. A frame or packet is received at a port of the network device. It is then determined that the frame or packet pertains to access of a virtual storage location of a virtual storage unit representing one or more physical storage locations on one or more physical storage units of the storage area network. A virtual-physical mapping between the one or more physical storage locations and the virtual storage location is then obtained. A new or modified frame or packet is then sent to an initiator or a target specified by the virtual-physical mapping.

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